

Amendments to the Claims

1-14. (Cancelled).

15. (Original): A liquid crystal display device, comprising:  
an alignment layer comprising constituent materials, the constituent materials  
including a stoichiometric relationship configured to provide a given pretilt angle; and  
liquid crystal material in contact with the alignment layer.

16. (Original): The device as recited in claim 15, wherein the material includes  
 $\text{SiC}_x$  wherein  $x$  is adjusted to provide the stoichiometric relationship.

17. (Original): The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the material  
includes silicon oxynitride.

18. (Original): The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the material  
includes a material having Pi-electrons.

19. (Original): The method as recited in claim 15, wherein the alignment layer  
includes a tilted homeotropic alignment layer.